

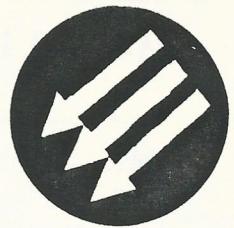
Hamilton's Autonomous Voice

FREE

Community Charge

ISSUE #11

July 1 - July 15



Boom or Bust for Us

In recent months the mainstream media has been detailing the costs of the recession and Free Trade on the people of this region. Although they relay some of the facts, and certainly the statistics, what they fail to show is that Hamilton was based on the concept of prosperity or disparity with very few in between. We are now realizing, the hard way, that this isn't an isolated situation and in fact has always been the system's relationship with the area. It only goes to show that the division of Hamilton's labour began right from the start, with mainly unskilled labourers travelling and then settling here. Then when Hamilton's industry called for specific work, skilled labourers came. The two which later became three major industries, they came to work for, were and are made or broken by the system of trade that we have come to dread. The first major employer were the docks, who's initial success led to the need for a Hamilton service sector. Though

more often than not the ship's cargo went right through Hamilton and into other regions. The next major employer was the railways in the mid 1800's, there both unskilled and skilled workers found work. Although it helped the area for a time, it too died down, since the market it served found other more readily available places for import (read cheaper). As a result many of the workers left as they came, following the job opportunities. What is different now is that the new face of Hamilton isn't a transient one. The (obviously fake) stability of the region brought on by the steel boom of the 1900's allowed small businesses and workers to settle, in other words the population picked up and left with the industries. One city worker commented "Look at downtown it's like a ghost town now". What we must realize is that with the permanent plant closures also go the storefronts. They too don't have the chance to pick up an leave.

The intention here isn't to make matters worse by historical example, but to show it isn't circumstance, but a calculated system that is the root of our problems. So by tending to our personal problems, and acting collectively we will have a chance to make this boom or bust system a bust for good.

We here at Community Charge have photocopies available of an informative pamphlet "Capitalism and Regional Disparities", by Ernest Mandel originally from New Hogtown Press for the price of postage. Other resources for this article: "The Hamilton Working Class", A Bibliography, by the Labour Studies Program McMaster University. "The Ram's Horn", a magazine which gives food and trade analysis, 1325 Highshield Rd., Toronto, Ont., M4L 2V4.

An organization of interest, is the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World), located at Toronto, 264 Oxford St., Toronto, Ont., M5T 1N9. Still at it, they believe in organization of all workers, including homemakers, students and the unemployed.

**IF YOU THINK THE
SYSTEM IS WORKING
ASK SOMEONE WHO ISN'T**

Acting Up

Free Todd Balow

ACT UP member John Kozachenko began court hearings on Monday, July 8. He will be tried on charges that he damaged the former Premier Bill Vander Zalm's limousine at an ACT UP protest last January. The incident took place at an AIDS protest as the then Premier arrived at the CKVU television studios in Vancouver for this "State of the Province" address on January 29, 1991.

Kozachenko is charged with "Mischief to Property not in excess of \$1,000", for allegedly damaging the car's hood when he climbed onto the limousine and confronted Mr. Vander Zalm yelling "I have AIDS and I want my rights." He was thrown onto the sidewalk by a private security agent and was later treated in hospital.

Kozachenko has pleaded "not guilty" to the charge. He said he smeared ketchup on the windshield as a symbol of the blood of people with AIDS on the hands of the Social Credit government. ACT UP supporters will be present during his trial on July 8.

"I'm being tried on the charge of 'Mischief to Property,' but Mr. Vander Zalm is guilty of a far worse crime with his lack of action on AIDS", said Kozachenko. "I wanted Vander Zalm to see what it is like to be personally affected by AIDS. People with AIDS are angry because this government treats us like the new lepers, and they continue to act as if AIDS is a 'self inflicted wound.'"

ACT UP Minnesota is requesting help in coming to the aid of Todd Balow, an HIV positive inmate at St. Cloud Reformatory. A guard illegally told other staff and inmates that Balow had AIDS and this news soon spread through the entire prison. Since then Todd has been "ordered" by other inmates not to use "their" bathrooms; sprayed with a water hose when he used "their" facilities; told not to go to lunch, since he would not be allowed to sit down anywhere, although he needs as much nutrition as possible in his condition. He has also been ordered not to come out of his cell, threatened with physical harm and harassed by inmates on a daily basis.

This kind of abuse alone is enough to accelerate the progression of his HIV disease and poses an immediate threat to his life. Balow was placed in segregation when fighting to defend himself from other inmates, but the warden was persuaded to suspend his penalty. For some reason the guards turned the exhaust fans on full blast and opened the windows on March 7, 1991, in the middle of winter on Balow's cell block. When he complained about the cold, the guards ordered him to shut up, and when he complained that he was freezing, he was put in segregation for disobeying a direct order. He was also denied the possibility of work release because, as his caseworker put it, "It's because you have AIDS."

Homophobic and AIDS-phobic authorities cannot be allowed to



get away with this kind of abuse of Todd Balow. It also creates a precedent for discrimination against other HIV positive prisoners or those perceived to have AIDS or HIV positive status. ACT UP and attorneys have documented proof confirming Balow's story, and are pursuing legal avenues for both the release of Balow and the prosecution of prison staff. Our immediate goal is for the expedient compassionate parole of Balow due to the possibility of daily abuse deteriorating his health.

**END
ANTI-AIDS
BIGOTRY
NOW**

Our Bodies, Our Rights

In the United States, the Louisiana Legislature adopted a new abortion law on June 19, 1991. The new law virtually prohibits all abortions in the state except those under special circumstances. These would include cases where the women's life would be in danger due to pregnancy and cases of rape or incest, but only those who meet certain conditions. It is ultimately the most restrictive abortion law in the country.

Under this law, women who's lives are in danger are permitted to obtain a safe and legal abortion but there are no provisions for those women who's health is at serious risk.

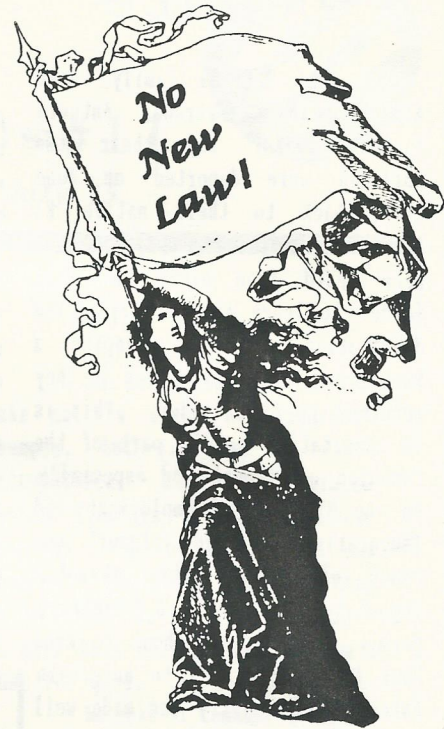
Also under this law, victims of rape and incest would have to report the attack to the police within seven days in order to be eligible for an abortion. Rape victims would also have to be

examined by a doctor other than the one performing the abortion within five days to determine whether or not she was pregnant before the rape. Abortions for both cases would have to be performed before the 13th week of pregnancy.

77% of rape victims know their attacker (this does not include victims of incest) whether they are a husband, friend, or lover. So now in Louisiana while women try to cope with the attack, they have to decide within seven days whether or not to turn someone in with whom they have had a personal relationship. And for those women who are raped and do not report it, later finding out that they are pregnant, must go through the term which will involve great emotional circumstances. This law undoubtedly dishonors women and unnecessarily traumatizes victims of rape and incest.

Along with these restrictive conditions for women to receive safe and legal abortions, doctors performing illegal abortions will be subjected to ten years imprisonment and fines of up to \$100,000.

said, "The old slogan 'a people united cannot be defeated' is just as valid today as when it was first coined." Write us for more info on our impending info packet on this and other dams.



Although the legislation is now law, it will not be enforced until late August due to a current challenge in the Supreme Court. The Louisiana legislature is being challenged by the Civil Liberties Union on the constitutionality of the new law. The new law will also be challenged by the precedent set in the Roe vs. Wade decision of 1973 which legalized second and third trimester abortions in the United States. For too long women have died from 'back street' abortions because racist and sexist right wing politicians using their power to keep control over our bodies. The court proceedings will begin July 23rd, 1991. We will have an update when a decision is passed.

No Go, for Dam Project

Those who read Community Charge (and we know there must be some) are familiar with our coverage of Canadian and U.S. dam projects. Well finally we have some good news. The Rafferty-Alameda dam project is an no go. A court decision stopped production for three months. Environmental, native and other activists who fought the dam don't see it as a court induced victory, but one of mass mobilization and solidarity from over 70 groups. One of the main organizers put it best when he

Update

The Estrada family, Jose Alberto Garcia Estrada, Antonia Furies Umanzor and their two children were deported on June 20th, back to their native El Salvador. As feared, they have not been heard from since they were forced to leave the country. The deportation occurred, despite a known threat to their lives if they returned to El Salvador. This is an abomination on the part of the Canadian government and especially on the Minister of Employment and Immigration, Bernard Valcourt who could have stopped this shameful deportation by issuing a Minister's permit, but instead chose to send back the family back to uncertain fates. The ministry was made well aware of the Estrada's threatening circumstances; including written proof that Jose was beaten in the streets of San Salvador along with other union members by government soldiers who later returned to his home and stabbed his wife Antonia five times. Several letters of appeal were made by various churches, refugee support groups, and prominent trade unionists, which repeated these findings. It is for certain that such high profile appeals were brought to the attention of the Ministry, but fell on deaf ears by a Ministry that now follows a policy of 'selectiveness', giving 'priority to those who will revitalize Canada's economic competitiveness', rather than reflecting any humanitarian concerns.

If anything is to come out positive from the Estrada's shameful deportation, it will be a strong backlash against the government's 'get tough' policy. This could significantly help future, genuine refugee claimants who like the Estrada's fled their native country to come to Canada out of fear for their lives.

If you are shocked about the Estrada deportation and are concerned about Canada's new 'get tough' policy, voice your concern to Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Employment and Immigration, 14th Floor Place du Portage, Phase IV, Hull, Quebec, K1A 0G9.

Oooppps

In the last issue of Community Charge, the Estrada family noted in the article, "Assessing the Human Costs", were deported from Montreal, not Toronto as mistakenly stated. We would like to apologize for the error.



Events

'A Night of Solidarity with the People of El Salvador', an evening of solidarity with music, Salvadoran food, a video and discussion on the situation in El Salvador. Saturday, July 20, 7:00PM, St. Thomas Church, 16 West Avenue South (at Main). For more information call 523-5662.

Hamilton Against Poverty is looking for ten participants for a workshop, "Social Service System: Where did they go wrong?" If you have had real problems dealing with the social service system and are interested in voicing these concerns and giving recommendations on how to solve these problems. Those recommendations will be submitted to the Ministry to consider for the development of new social assistance legislation. All information is confidential and a copy of the report will be available for everyone at a later date. For more information call Mary at 522-1148.

COMMUNITY CHARGE covers local and international news from an anti-statist perspective. If you wish to contribute too, or receive this newsletter, please send an SASE to:

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